

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

5 1. A method for specifying messaging session outputs,
comprising the steps of:

receiving a message entry associated with a particular topic
from among a plurality of available topics from a separate
10 sending user from among a plurality of users participating in a
messaging session; and

assigning output attributes to said message entry for each
separate receiving user from among said plurality of users
according to a plurality of receiving user specified output
preferences for said particular topic each associated with one
from among each said separate receiving user participating in
said messaging session, such that output of said message entry is
uniquely received by each said separate receiving user.

2. The method for specifying messaging session outputs
according to claim 1, said method further comprising the step of:

receiving said message entry at a messaging server
25 communicatively connected via a network to a plurality of
messaging systems accessible to said plurality of users.

3. The method for specifying messaging session outputs according to claim 1, said step of assigning output attributes to said message entry further comprising the step of:

5 assigning output attributes to said message entry according to channel options for said messaging session.

4. The method for specifying messaging session outputs according to claim 1, said step of assigning output attributes to
10 said message entry further comprising the step of:

assigning a distinguishable graphic to said message entry according to a separate receiving user specified output preference from among said plurality of receiving user specified output preferences.

5. The method for specifying messaging session outputs according to claim 1, said step of assigning output attributes to said message entry further comprising the step of:

assigning a distinguishable font to said message entry according to a separate receiving user specified output preference from among said plurality of receiving user specified output preferences.

6. The method for specifying messaging session outputs according to claim 1, said step of assigning output attributes to said message entry further comprising the step of:

5 assigning a particular graphical window for display of said message entry according to a separate receiving user specified output preference from among said plurality of receiving user specified output preferences.

10 7. The method for specifying messaging session outputs according to claim 1, said step of assigning output attributes to said message entry further comprising the step of:

assigning a particular sound to said message entry according to a separate receiving user specified output preference from among said plurality of receiving user specified output preferences.

15 8. The method for specifying messaging session outputs according to claim 1, said step of assigning output attributes to said message entry further comprising the step of:

20 assigning a particular style comprising multiple output attributes to said message entry according to a separate receiving user specified output preference from among said plurality of receiving user specified output preferences.

25

9. The method for specifying messaging session outputs according to claim 1, said step of assigning output attributes to said message entry further comprising the step of:

5 assigning said output attributes to said message entry according to a separate receiving user specified output preference based on a device utilized by a user associated with said separate receiving user specified output preference from among said plurality of receiving user specified output
10 preferences.

10. The method for specifying messaging session outputs according to claim 1, said step of assigning output attributes to said message entry further comprising the step of:

assigning said output attributes to distinguish between said plurality of topics within a channel of said messaging session.

11. The method for specifying messaging session outputs according to claim 1, said step of assigning output attributes to said message entry further comprising the step of:

assigning said output attributes to distinguish between said plurality of users within a channel of said messaging session.

12. A system for specifying messaging session outputs,
comprising:

a messaging system communicatively connected to a network;

said messaging system comprising:

means for receiving a message entry associated with a
particular topic from among a plurality of available topics
from a separate sending user from among a plurality of users
participating in a messaging session; and

means for assigning output attributes to said message
entry for each separate receiving user from among said
plurality of users according to a plurality of receiving
user specified output preferences for said particular topic
each associated with one from among each said separate
receiving user participating in said messaging session, such
that output of said message entry is uniquely received by
each said separate receiving user.

13. The system for specifying messaging session outputs
according to claim 12, wherein said messaging system functions as
a messaging server communicatively connected via said network to
a plurality of messaging systems accessible to said plurality of
users.

14. The system for specifying messaging session outputs according to claim 12, said means for assigning output attributes to said message entry further comprising:

5 means for assigning output attributes to said message entry according to channel options for said messaging session.

15. The system for specifying messaging session outputs according to claim 12, said means for assigning output attributes
10 to said message entry further comprising:

means for assigning a distinguishable graphic to said message entry according to a separate receiving user specified output preference from among said plurality of receiving user specified output preferences.
15

16. The system for specifying messaging session outputs according to claim 12, said means for assigning output attributes to said message entry further comprising:
20

means for assigning a distinguishable font to said message entry according to a separate receiving user specified output preference from among said plurality of receiving user specified output preferences.
25

17. The system for specifying messaging session outputs according to claim 12, said means for assigning output attributes to said message entry further comprising:

5 means for assigning a particular graphical window for display of said message entry according to a separate receiving user specified output preference from among said plurality of receiving user specified output preferences.

10 18. The system for specifying messaging session outputs according to claim 12, said means for assigning output attributes to said message entry further comprising:

means for assigning a particular sound to said message entry according to a separate receiving user specified output preference from among said plurality of receiving user specified output preferences.

19. The system for specifying messaging session outputs according to claim 12, said means for assigning output attributes to said message entry further comprising:

20 means for assigning a particular style comprising multiple output attributes to said message entry according to a separate receiving user specified output preference from among said plurality of receiving user specified output preferences.

25

means for assigning said output attributes to said message entry according to a separate receiving user specified output preference based on a device utilized by a user associated with said separate receiving user specified output preference from among said plurality of receiving user specified output preferences.

means for assigning said output attributes to distinguish between said plurality of topics within a channel of said messaging session.

means for assigning said output attributes to distinguish between said plurality of users within a channel of said messaging session.

23. A program for specifying messaging session outputs, residing on a computer usable medium having computer readable program code means, said program comprising:

5 means for receiving a message entry associated with a particular topic from among a plurality of available topics from a separate sending user from among a plurality of users participating in a messaging session; and

10 means for assigning output attributes to said message entry for each separate receiving user from among said plurality of users according to a plurality of receiving user specified output preferences for said particular topic each associated with one from among each said separate receiving user participating in said messaging session, such that output of said message entry is uniquely received by each said separate receiving user.

20 24. The program for specifying messaging session outputs according to claim 23, said means for assigning output attributes to said message entry further comprising:

means for assigning output attributes to said message entry according to channel options for said messaging session.

25. The program for specifying messaging session outputs according to claim 23, said program further comprising:

means for assigning a distinguishable graphic to said message entry according to a separate receiving user specified output preference from among said plurality of receiving user specified output preferences.

26. The program for specifying messaging session outputs according to claim 23, said program further comprising:

means for assigning a distinguishable font to said message entry according to a separate receiving user specified output preference from among said plurality of receiving user specified output preferences.

27. The program for specifying messaging session outputs according to claim 23, said program further comprising:

means for assigning a particular graphical window for display of said message entry according to a separate receiving user specified output preference from among said plurality of receiving user specified output preferences.

28. The program for specifying messaging session outputs according to claim 23, said program further comprising:

means for assigning a particular sound to said message entry according to a separate receiving user specified output preference from among said plurality of receiving user specified output preferences.

29. The program for specifying messaging session outputs according to claim 23, said program further comprising:

means for assigning a particular style comprising multiple output attributes to said message entry according to a separate receiving user specified output preference from among said plurality of receiving user specified output preferences.

30. The program for specifying messaging session outputs according to claim 23, said program further comprising:

means for assigning said output attributes to said message entry according to a separate receiving user specified output preference based on a device utilized by a user associated with said separate receiving user specified output preference from among said plurality of receiving user specified output preferences.

31. The program for specifying messaging session outputs according to claim 23, said program further comprising:

means for assigning said output attributes to distinguish
5 between said plurality of topics within a channel of said messaging session.

32. The program for specifying messaging session outputs according to claim 23, said program further comprising:

10 means for assigning said output attributes to distinguish between said plurality of users within a channel of said messaging session.

33. A method for organizing messaging sessions, said method comprising the steps of:

receiving a request for a new topic from a particular user
from among a plurality of users participating in a particular
channel of a messaging session; and

in response to approving said new topic, updating a
plurality of topic options for said particular channel of said
messaging session to said plurality of users participating in
25 said particular channel, such that said new topic is selectable
by said plurality of users in association with a message entry.

34. A system for organizing messaging sessions, said system comprising:

means for receiving a request for a new topic from a particular user from among a plurality of users participating in a particular channel of a messaging session; and

means for updating a plurality of topic options for said particular channel of said messaging session to said plurality of users participating in said particular channel, responsive to approving said new topic.

35. A program for organizing messaging sessions, residing on a computer usable medium having computer readable program code means, said program comprising:

means for receiving a request for a new topic from a particular user from among a plurality of users participating in a particular channel of a messaging session; and

means for updating a plurality of topic options for said particular channel of said messaging session to said plurality of users participating in said particular channel, responsive to approving said new topic.

F E F 5

36. A method for controlling messaging outputs in a messaging session, said method comprising the steps of:

receiving a plurality of message entries each associated with a particular topic from among a plurality of topics within a particular channel of a messaging session; and

controlling output of said plurality of message entries according to output attributes assigned to said plurality of message entries for a particular user to distinguish according to a receiving user's preferences between said plurality of topics, such that output of said plurality of message entries according to topic is distinguished according to a user receiving said plurality of message entries.

37. The method for controlling messaging outputs in a messaging session according to claim 1, said step of controlling output of said plurality of message entries according to output attributes further comprising the step of:

controlling output of said plurality of message entries according to an assigned graphical output attribute.

0945945-073604
20

38. The method for controlling messaging outputs in a messaging session according to claim 1, said step of controlling output of said plurality of message entries according to output attributes further comprising the step of:

5

controlling output of said plurality of message entries according to an assigned audible output attribute.

39. The method for controlling messaging outputs in a messaging session according to claim 1, said step of controlling output of said plurality of message entries according to output attributes further comprising the step of:

10

controlling output of said plurality of message entries to distinguish between said plurality of users.

40. The method for controlling messaging outputs in a messaging session according to claim 1, said step of controlling output of said plurality of message entries according to output attributes further comprising the step of:

controlling output of said plurality of message entries in distinguishable graphical interfaces according to said plurality of topics.

25

41. A system for controlling messaging outputs in a messaging session, said system comprising:

a client messaging system communicatively connected to a network;

said client messaging system further comprising;

means for receiving a plurality of message entries each associated with a particular topic from among a plurality of topics within a particular channel of a messaging session; and

means for controlling output of said plurality of message entries according to output attributes assigned to said plurality of message entries for a particular user to distinguish according to a receiving user's preferences between said plurality of topics, such that output of said plurality of message entries according to topic is distinguished according to a user receiving said plurality of message entries.

42. The system for controlling messaging outputs in a messaging session according to claim 41, said means for controlling output of said plurality of message entries according to output attributes further comprising:

means for controlling output of said plurality of message entries according to an assigned graphical output attribute.

43. The system for controlling messaging outputs in a messaging session according to claim 41, said means for controlling output of said plurality of message entries according to output
5 attributes further comprising:

means for controlling output of said plurality of message entries according to an assigned audible output attribute.

10 44. The system for controlling messaging outputs in a messaging session according to claim 41, said means for controlling output of said plurality of message entries according to output attributes further comprising:

5 means for controlling output of said plurality of message entries to distinguish between said plurality of users.

45. The system for controlling messaging outputs in a messaging session according to claim 41, said means for controlling output
20 of said plurality of message entries according to output attributes further comprising:

means for controlling output of said plurality of message entries in distinguishable graphical interfaces according to said
25 plurality of topics.

46. A program for controlling messaging outputs in a messaging session, residing on a computer usable medium having computer readable program code means, said program comprising:

5 means for receiving a plurality of message entries each associated with a particular topic from among a plurality of topics within a particular channel of a messaging session; and

10 means for controlling output of said plurality of message entries according to output attributes assigned to said plurality of message entries for a particular user to distinguish according to a receiving user's preferences between said plurality of topics, such that output of said plurality of message entries according to topic is distinguished according to a user receiving said plurality of message entries.

47. The program for controlling messaging outputs in a messaging session according to claim 46, said program further comprising:

20 means for controlling output of said plurality of message entries according to an assigned graphical output attribute.

48. The program for controlling messaging outputs in a messaging session according to claim 46, said program further comprising:

25 means for controlling output of said plurality of message entries according to an assigned audible output attribute.

49. The program for controlling messaging outputs in a messaging session according to claim 46, said program further comprising:

5 means for controlling output of said plurality of message entries to distinguish between said plurality of users.

50. The program for controlling messaging outputs in a messaging session according to claim 46, said program further comprising:

10 means for controlling output of said plurality of message entries in distinguishable graphical interfaces according to said plurality of topics.

15 51. A method for enabling topic selection within a messaging system, said method comprising the steps of:

20 displaying a plurality of selectable topics available for selection in association with a message entry prior to distribution;

receiving a selection from among said plurality of selectable topic by a sending user participating in a messaging session; and

25 assigning a particular topic associated with said selection from among said plurality of selectable topics to a message entry prior to distribution of said message entry to at least one other user participating in said messaging session.

52. The method for enabling topic selection within a messaging system according to claim 51, said method further comprising the step of:

5 displaying said plurality of selectable topics each with a separate graphical attribute also utilized to distinguishably display a selection of message entries received with assignments to each of said plurality of selectable topics.

10 53. A system for enabling topic selection within a messaging system, said system comprising:

means for graphically displaying a plurality of selectable topics available for selection in association with a message entry prior to distribution;

means for receiving a selection from among said plurality of selectable topic by a sending user participating in a messaging session; and

means for assigning a particular topic associated with said selection from among said plurality of selectable topics to a message entry prior to distribution of said message entry to at least one other user participating in said messaging session.

54. The system for enabling topic selection within a messaging system according to claim 53, said system further comprising:

means for graphically displaying said plurality of
5 selectable topics each with a separate graphical attribute also
utilized to distinguishably display a selection of message
entries received with assignments to each of said plurality of
selectable topics.

10 55. A program for enabling topic selection within a messaging
system, residing on a computer usable medium having computer
readable program code means, said program comprising:

means for graphically displaying a plurality of selectable
5 topics available for selection in association with a message
entry prior to distribution;

means for receiving a selection from among said plurality of
selectable topic by a sending user participating in a messaging
20 session; and

means for assigning a particular topic associated with said
selection from among said plurality of selectable topics to a
message entry prior to distribution of said message entry to at
25 least one other user participating in said messaging session.

56. The program for enabling topic selection within a messaging system according to claim 55, said program further comprising:

means for graphically displaying said plurality of
selectable topics each with a separate graphical attribute also
utilized to distinguishably display a selection of message
entries received with assignments to each of said plurality of
selectable topics.

57. A method for specializing outputs in a messaging system,
said method comprising the steps of:

enabling selection of output preferences for output of
received message entries within a messaging session according to
any one of a topic, a user, and a device; and

distinguishing said output of said received message entries
according to said output preferences by utilizing unique
variation in any one of a color, a font, a style, or audio.

58. A system for specializing outputs in a messaging system,
said system comprising:

means for enabling selection of output preferences for output of received message entries within a messaging session according to any one of a topic, a user, and a device; and

means for distinguishing said output of said received message entries according to said output preferences by utilizing unique variation in any one of a color, a font, a style, or audio.

59. A program for specializing outputs in a messaging system, residing on a computer usable medium having computer readable program code means, said program comprising:

means for enabling selection of output preferences for output of received message entries within a messaging session according to any one of a topic, a user, and a device; and

means for distinguishing said output of said received message entries according to said output preferences by utilizing unique variation in any one of a color, a font, a style, or audio.